

# Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council

## 2023-2024 Legislative Priorities



### CHOICE

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**H.1485/S.109 - An Act relative to authorizing supported decision-making agreements for certain adults with disabilities.** Creates a process by which certain adults with disabilities who need assistance with decisions may choose to make and communicate decisions. It is an **alternative to guardianship** and does not replace guardianship in any way. *Representative Mike Finn and Sean Garballey and Senator Joan Lovely*

### WORKFORCE

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**H.171/S.83 – An Act relative to rates for workers providing supports and services for individuals with disabilities.** This bill has to do with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and MassHealth **workforce rate increase**. This bill addresses the severe workforce shortage of direct support staff, program managers, and clinicians such as nurses. *Representatives Sean Garballey and Simon Cataldo and Senator Barry Finegold*

**H.1192/S.748 – An Act to protect medically fragile children.** Requires the state to **increase the budget** for **continuous skilled nursing** services in home care and mandates the office of Medicaid to **review the wage payment rates** established by home health agencies. *Representative Denise Garlick and Senator Cindy Friedman*

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

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**H.378/S.152 – An Act expanding wheelchair warranty protections for consumers with disabilities.** Expands Customized Wheelchair Lemon Law to **strengthen warranty protections** for consumers that use wheelchairs. *Representative Jim O’Day and Senator John Cronin*

### HEALTH

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**H.1180/S.753 - An Act relative to preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health care.** Prohibits hospitals, medical providers, or other public/private entities from withholding or de-prioritizing lifesaving care due to a person’s *perceived* quality of life stemming from a disability. *Representative Josh Cutler and Senator Adam Gomez*

**H.213/S.123 – An act to increase the safety of individuals with disabilities relying on life-support equipment (Tommy’s Law).** Bill requires **appropriate discharge plan review** with residential facility nursing staff and increasing accountability for medical equipment monitoring. *Representative Dave Rogers and Senator Patrick O’Connor*

## HOUSING/WORKPLACE

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### **S.1553 – An Act building a more accessible Massachusetts**

This bill **addresses loopholes** that prevent buildings constructed prior to 1991, and all workplaces to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It accomplishes this by bringing such buildings under the purview of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board when newly built or when major renovations take place, ensuring more accessible housing units are available in our state and expanding employment access.

*Senator Michael Moore*

### **H.2291 – Act expanding the availability of adaptable housing for people with disabilities and seniors.**

This bill **addresses loopholes** that prevent buildings constructed prior to 1991, and all workplaces to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It accomplishes this by bringing such buildings under the purview of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board when newly built or when major renovations take place, ensuring more accessible housing units are available in our state, and expanding employment access. *Representatives Michael Moran and Christine Barber*

**H.1296/S.904 – An Act relative to accessory dwelling units.** Bill is designed to encourage the creation of accessory dwelling units in the form of 2-bedroom affordable accessory apartments for people with disabilities and seniors.

*Representative Christine Barber and Senator Bruce Tarr*

## EQUITABLE ACCESS

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**H.207/S.103 – Act relative to persons with developmental disabilities.** Bill adopts the **federal definition** of developmental disabilities, which includes fetal alcohol syndrome. *Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Joan Lovely*

## FAMILY

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**H.1601/S.1037 – An Act prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in Family and Juvenile Court proceedings** Parents should **not be denied the right to raise their children** solely based on their disability. This bill requires courts to use evidence, not assumptions, to determine if a parent's disability causes actual harm to a child. Courts will have to explain in writing if a parent's disability is a negative factor in custody and parenting time decisions and assess if the harm can be avoided with accommodations (like adaptive equipment or supportive services). *Representative Kay Khan and Senator Joan Lovely*